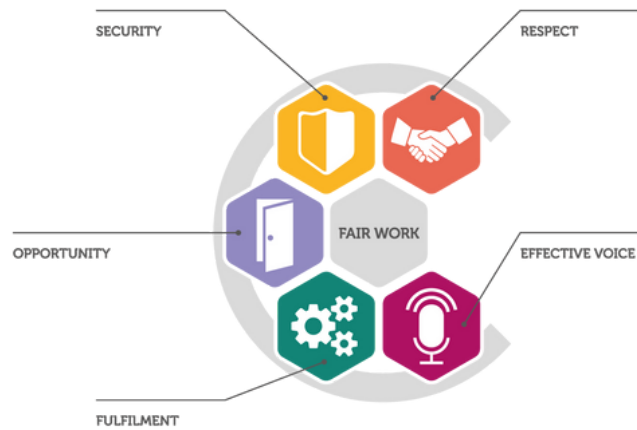




**The Fair Work Convention's
year in review and look
ahead to 2024**

YEAR IN REVIEW AND LOOK AHEAD TO 2024



The Fair Work Convention's year in review and look ahead to 2024

We begin 2024 at a pivotal point in the fair work agenda with the Convention's vision of Scotland becoming a Fair Work Nation by 2025 fast approaching.

It has been another challenging year for many workers and employers who are struggling through the demands of the cost of living crisis in the aftermath of Covid-19 and Brexit. In these exceptional times, we believe that adopting a fair work approach is more important than ever. Although there is still much to do to achieve our goal of becoming a leading Fair Work Nation by 2025, this last year has again seen some encouraging progress particularly in the Real Living Wage.

While progress has been made in some areas, our recent 'Measuring Scotland's Performance as a Leading Fair Work Nation' report highlighted the extent of persistent inequality at the workplace level, and this is deeply concerning.

Becoming a Fair Work Nation is both challenging and aspirational and it will take sustained effort to change the experience of work for the better.

The Scottish Government has placed significant focus on fair work, but the scale and the reach of fair work actions have, to date, been limited.

As we look ahead to what can be achieved in 2024 and towards 2025, greater attention now needs to be placed on mainstreaming a fair work approach across the public sector, on building capacity amongst employers, and on delivering on fair work commitments to create meaningful change.



View from the Chairs

2023 brought with it significant political change with the resignation of Scotland's longest standing First Minister, Nicola Sturgeon and the appointment of Humza Yousaf as First Minister.

This change has meant the appointment of a new cabinet and we welcomed the appointment of new Cabinet Secretary for Wellbeing Economy, Fair Work and Energy, Neil Gray MSP.

We continued to promote and push for the implementation of our Social Care Inquiry and the Construction Industry Inquiry with Scottish Ministers, seeking to make fair work a reality for workers in both sectors an urgent priority.

Scotland's just transition to net zero carbon emissions must bring good, well-paid jobs

Fair work must be at the heart of Scotland's energy transition.

Commenting on Scotland's Just Transition, our co-chairs, Mary Alexander and Patricia Findlay joined Just Transition Commission chair Jim Skea in a joint article in the Scotsman.

Our energy system in Scotland is undergoing major changes. The energy transition isn't just about giant wind turbines and cables on our hillsides and along our coasts. It is also about making the most of this generational chance to deliver positive change for the people of Scotland, building a country that is not just greener but fairer.

Read the full [Scotsman Column here](#)



YEAR IN REVIEW AND LOOK AHEAD TO 2024



Hospitality Inquiry

The inquiry was launched in June 2022 and is now nearing its conclusion with our final report and recommendations due in spring 2024. We have heard from key stakeholders and explored topics such as precarious and problematic work, skills and training, equality and inclusion and the additional challenges facing rural businesses.

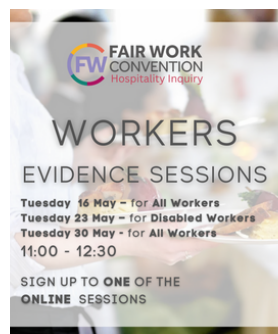
In the summer, we launched a Survey of Hospitality Businesses and Workers who work in Scotland on the challenges they face and aspirations for the future. The Convention also conducted key evidence sessions throughout the year and spoke with disabled workers groups, rural and urban hospitality businesses, liaised with trade unions and took evidence from EU migrant workers in partnership with the Citizens Rights Project.

This year we commissioned two pieces of research to help evidence our inquiry; the Scottish Centre for Employment Research (SCER) at Strathclyde Business School conducted research on the levers - or mechanisms - for advancing fair work within the hospitality industry; and the National Institute of Economic and Social Research (NIESR) published its research 'A qualitative investigation into the experiences of workers in the hospitality sector in Scotland' research in January.

We also participated in this year's Scot Hot event at Glasgow's SEC in March, the Ayrshire and Arran Tourism Conference in April and the Scottish Tourism Alliance annual Conference in October. In each event we were able to engage with people who work in Scotland's hospitality sector, gather their views and let them know about how they can get involved in the inquiry. Thank you to all who came along and spoke to us.

There is still much ground to cover but we are on track to publish our inquiry in Spring 2024.

[Read more about our Hospitality Inquiry here](#)



Measuring Fair Work

In November, we published our latest report, 'Measuring Scotland's Performance as a Leading Fair Work Nation'. The research compares Scotland's relative performance to Denmark, Belgium, Austria, Finland, Iceland, Ireland, the Netherlands and England within a new International Fair Work Framework.

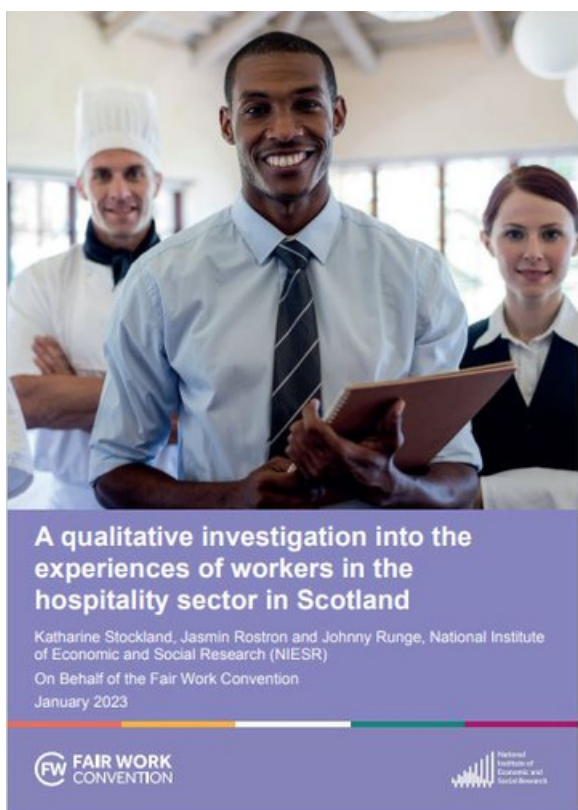
According to the research findings, Scotland must improve on thirteen out of fourteen indicators.

Some progress has been made but Scotland has more to do to meet its ambition of becoming a leading Fair Work Nation by 2025.

[Read more about the findings here](#)



In January, the Convention commissioned a piece of research undertaken by the National Institute of Economic and Social Research (NIESR) "[A qualitative investigation into the experiences of workers in the hospitality sector in Scotland](#)". This research adds to the evidence base for our Hospitality Inquiry, providing examples of the lived experiences of hospitality workers and will help the Fair Work Hospitality Inquiry Group identify key issues facing workers and businesses.



YEAR IN REVIEW AND LOOK AHEAD TO 2024



Connecting with our Strategic Partners



Working Lives Scotland annual report

As CIPD Scotland's 'Working Lives Scotland' report reaches its fourth year, it is rapidly becoming an invaluable part of the evidence landscape on the fairness of work. Building up a time series like this tells a story about the changing conditions of work and the factors influencing it. The Fair Work Convention is grateful to the CIPD for continuing to invest in data-gathering that is critical to ensuring policy interventions are made on solid grounds.

Read the full Working Lives Scotland 2023 report and forward from our Chairs [here](#)



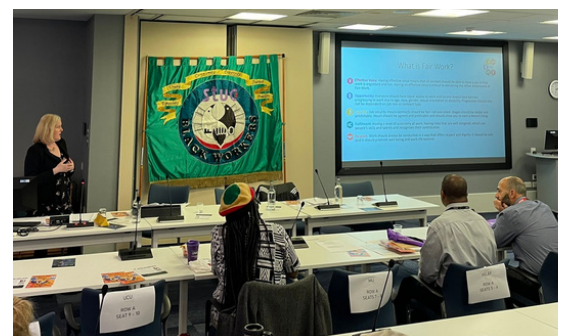
Fair Work and the Volunteer Charter

Chief Executive of the SCVO and Fair Work Convention member, Anna Fowlie, talks about fair work and the ten key principles of the Volunteer Charter which help to underpin good relations within a volunteering environment.

[Read more here](#)



Throughout the year, the Convention have worked hard alongside our strategic partners to advocate fair work. This included making new connections at the 126th STUC Annual Congress at Dundee in April, presenting Fair Work Workshops at the STUC Black Workers Conference and the STUC Disabled Committee as well as our co-chair, Patricia Findlay joining the STUC's General Secretary, Roz Foyer and fellow panellists Clair Baker MSP, Catherine William and Dr Rafael Peels at this year's Festival of Politics on workers' rights.



GUEST BLOGS

Throughout the year we invite guest bloggers to contribute to our website reflecting on fair work in Scotland.

Here is a selection of blogs from across the year.

- **The real Living Wage is more than a number** – Poverty Alliance director, Peter Kelly
- **#BHM 2023 and Fair Work** – STUC Black Workers' Committee and Fair Work Convention member, Satnam Ner
- **4 Steps to Fair Work Campaign** - Chief Executive, Coalition of Care & Support Providers in Scotland, Rachel Cackett
- **Getting a New Deal for Retail Workers after the Covid Pandemic** – Scottish Regional Secretary for USDAW and Fair Work Convention, Tracy Gilbert
- **Fair work and Community Wealth building: Allied Agendas, Securing Outcomes** - Community Wealth Building Adviser to the Scottish Government, Neil McInroy



YEAR IN REVIEW AND LOOK AHEAD TO 2024



The Fair Work Convention's achievements would not be possible without the support and commitment of our members who work hard to ensure fair work drives success, wellbeing and prosperity for individuals, businesses, organisations and society across Scotland.

The Convention has covered, discussed and debated many topics throughout 2023 including Community Wealth Building Legislation, the Minimum Income Guarantee, the retained EU Law Bill and progress of the Scottish National Investment Bank.

We have had meetings with the Cabinet Secretary for Wellbeing Economy, Fair Work and Energy, Neil Gray MSP and the new Director General of Economy, Gregor Irwin on our commitment to working with the Scottish Government to ensure workers, businesses and communities continue to benefit from fair work and on our shared ambition for Scotland becoming a Fair Work Nation. We have also held in person business planning sessions, looking at what the Convention's priorities should be going forward.

We look forward to the launch of our Hospitality Inquiry report and recommendations and will continue to promote and push for the implementation of the Social Care Inquiry and our Construction Industry Inquiry throughout 2024.

To quote Lawrence Newland, Director at Alma Economics commenting on the Measuring Fair Work research, he said "Comparison countries provide a roadmap for what is achievable over the short-term and medium-term. Going further, in the long-term even greater ambition is needed to set goals such as reaching employment and pay gaps of zero."

The prize that we are all working towards is for Scotland to have a prosperous, dynamic and thriving Scottish economy where everyone shares in and benefits from fair work. Our appeal is now to keep building on progress that has been made and make greater efforts throughout 2024 to ensure security, opportunity, respect, fulfilment and effective voice become a reality for every worker in Scotland. This is the time for us all to commit to advance fair work.

